

# PROCEEDING INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

DECEMBER, 19<sup>th</sup> 2013

“OPTIMAZING OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES  
TO EXAGGERATE HUMAN POTENTIAL  
TOWARDS VIRTUOUS CHARACTER”



**Teacher Education “Madrasah Ibtidaiyah”  
Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher’s Training  
Islamic State University Sunan Kalijaga  
Yogyakarta**

**PROCEEDING  
INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR**

**“OPTIMIZING OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES  
TO EXAGGERATE HUMAN POTENTIAL TOWARDS  
VIRTUOUS CHARACTER”**

**Editors:**

**Saedah Siraj**

**W. Allan Bush**

**Jainatul Halida Jaidin**

**Fitri Yuliawati**



**Teacher Education “Madrasah Ibtidaiyah”  
Faculty Islamic Education and Teacher Training  
Islamic State University Sunan Kalijaga  
Yogyakarta  
December, 19<sup>th</sup> 2013**



# **PROCEEDING INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR**

ON THE 1<sup>st</sup> SUMMIT MEETING ON EDUCATION, THE END OF THE YEAR 2013

## **“OPTIMIZING OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES TO EXAGGERATE HUMAN POTENTIAL TOWARDS VIRTUOUS CHARACTER”**

Hak Cipta Dilindungi Undang-undang

*Copyright @ 2013*

xii, 337 ; 21 x 35 cm

ISBN: 978-602-14483-2-8

### **Editors:**

**Saedah Siraj**

**W. Allan Bush**

**Jainatul Halida Jaidin**

**Fitri Yuliawati**

Penerbit:

**BUKU BAIK**

Ngringinan, Palbapang, Bantul, Bantul, Yogyakarta, 55713

E-mail: [penerbitbukubaik@yahoo.com](mailto:penerbitbukubaik@yahoo.com)

## OPTIMIZING MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE THROUGH THEMATIC LEARNING IN EARLY GRADE STUDENTS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Written by:

Amaliyah Ulfah<sup>1</sup>, M. Tolkhah Adityas<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer of PGSD at Ahmad Dahlan University Yogyakarta

<sup>2</sup> Lecturer of PBI at Ahmad Dahlan University Yogyakarta

Email: <sup>1</sup>misshomeciul@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>aditboma@gmail.com

=====

### ABSTRACT

Elementary school education is part of the national education system that has a very important role in improving human resources. Education in primary school aims at equipping learners' knowledge, skills, attitudes of and optimizing their intelligence to optimally develop. Elementary school, especially in early grades is one of the most important periods for a child due in the golden age during which children's potentials are growing very fast. However, the implementation of the previous curricula tends to focus merely on cognitive aspects. This intends to build a high IQ generation, even though IQ does not necessarily guarantee success in the future life. Therefore, learning in primary schools should not only develop IQ, but also EQ and SQ. Thematic learning is one of the integrated learning models using the theme as a unifying means for linking multiple subjects. Thematic learning is student-centered learning whose development should pay attention to the students' characteristics, potential, and interests. The theme used should be actual, close to the children, and linked with everyday life so that it can optimize the entire intelligence and provide meaningful experiences to the students.

**Keywords:** *elementary students, thematic, multiple intelligence*

### INTRODUCTION

Elementary school education is a part of the national education system that has an important role in improving human resources. The provision of Education in primary schools is intended to provide basic skills to the students in the form of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will benefit themselves according to their level of development (Suharjo, 2006: 1). Besides, education in elementary school also aims to develop the whole children intelligence in order to develop optimally.

Gage and Berlier (1988) in Fajar explains intelligence is one's ability to solve problems that typically uses abstraction and general knowledge gained from informal interaction of the environment. Students' intelligence is very different; therefore, it needs to be developed. However, the current study is considered to be a shift towards the concept of meaning that is more likely to emphasize on teaching Intelligence Quotient (IQ). Masnur Muslich (2011: 17) also describes the current education is too much spare on the aspects of knowledge, and is less able to develop values

, attitudes, and character.

A student is often considered successful and intelligent if his/her IQ test is high and has good grades. In fact, a lot of examples around us that people who have a high IQ does not necessarily succeed in work, while those who have moderate IQ are even more successful in life. Seto Mulyadi (2002) also revealed that it is wrong if the only measurement of a person's ability is assessed from intelligence of logic and language; It should be judged on other aspects of intelligence.

This education system exactly needs to be fixed. Education should not only look at a person's intelligence based on IQ or grades, but using multiple intelligent as a basis to assess the ability. Basically, no student is stupid; every student has the potential and uniqueness.

The concept of multiple intelligence was first introduced by Howard Garner in 1983. Howard Garner in 2006 in his book *Multiple Intelligent* explains that a person's intelligence is not enough to be measured by the ability of IQ alone to determine a person's success in life. Garner suggests 8 types of intelligence to measure a person's intelligence, they are mathematical logic, linguistic, musical, visual-spatial, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist.

The optimization of multiple intelligent in elementary school can be done with creative and innovative learning like thematic. Thematic learning is a learning approach that has been mandated in the curriculum of *KTSP* and 2013, especially in the early grades of primary school students. Primary school children undergo a very important period in life because a child's brain develops very rapidly in this period. Thematic learning can optimally develop students' potential and meet their needs. Children will learn a variety of fields of study in one theme that highlights aspects of its activities not only in knowledge, but also in the ability in the other aspects, so that learning will be more meaningful.

## DISCUSSION

### Multiple Intelligence

Howard Garner explains 8 types of intelligence that can be used to measure a person's intelligence; they are mathematical logic, linguistic, musical, visual-spatial, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. Furthermore, Armstrong (2002) in his book adds one more intelligence called existentialist intelligence. Each intelligence has a specification and is explained as follows:

#### 1. Linguistic intelligence

Linguistic intelligence is the ability to use words effectively, either to influence or to manipulate. In everyday life linguistic is useful for talking, listening, reading, and writing. The job that prioritizes intelligence are teachers, orators, movie stars, TV presenters, lawyers, authors, etc.

#### 2. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

Logical-mathematical intelligence involves skill or proficiency in numbers, logic and common sense. In everyday life this intelligence is used analyze financial statements, understand the calculation of the national debt, or ingestion of a research report. Jobs requiring intelligence are tax accountants, programmers, mathematicians, scientists, etc.

#### 3. Spatial intelligence

Spatial intelligence involves a person's ability to visualize images inside (imagination) or create it in the form of two- or three -dimensions. The examples of this intelligence in everyday life include decorating the house, garden designing, drawing or painting, art work, etc. The job that prioritizes spatial intelligence includes architects, sculptors, inventors, designers, etc.

#### 4. Kinesthetic Intelligence

Kinesthetic intelligence is the intelligence of the entire body and also the intelligence of the hand. In the everyday life we are in need of this intelligence on for example: opening a bottle cap, installing the lights in the house, repairing cars, sports, dancing, etc. The type of job that requires intelligence includes athletes, dancers, actors, tailors, surgeons, etc.

#### 5. Musical Intelligence

Musical intelligence involves the ability to sing a song, remember the melody of music, have a sense of rhythm, or just enjoy the music. In everyday life, we benefit from this intelligence in many ways, for example: when we sing, play musical instruments, enjoying music on TV/radio, etc. Jobs requiring intelligence include singer, pianist, disc jockey (DJ), sound technician, piano repairperson, etc.

#### 6. Interpersonal Intelligence

Interpersonal intelligence involves the ability to understand and work with others. In everyday life, whether for personal, family, and work, this intelligence is considered absolutely necessary - and is often referred to as the “more important” than the other intelligence to be successful in life. Interpersonal intelligence involves many things, for example: the ability to empathize, the ability to manipulate, the ability to “read people”, the ability to make friends, and so on. Jobs relating to other people and in need of this intelligence include a public figure, leader, teacher, counselor, etc.

#### 7. Intrapersonal Intelligence

Intrapersonal intelligence is the intelligence possessed by a person to understand his/herself, the intelligence to know “who I am” to know “what my strengths and weaknesses are”. Jobs requiring this intrapersonal intelligence include: entrepreneurs, counselors, therapists, etc.

#### 8. Naturalist Intelligence

Naturalist intelligence involves the ability to recognize the natural forms around us. In daily life we need the intelligence for gardening, camping, or doing ecological projects. The jobs requiring naturalist intelligence include biologists, veterinarians, etc.

#### 9. Existentialist intelligence

Existential intelligence is one’s ability to answer the deepest problems of human existence and whereabouts. The characteristics of this intelligence are those who always questions everything about nature and the role of self-existence in nature. The jobs that require this type of intelligence are philosopher and theologian.

**Table 1. Examples of people with certain intelligence and their expertise**

No	Type of intelligence	Person	Expertise
1	Linguistic Intelligence	Chairil Awal	Poet
2	Logical-Mathematical Intelligence	B J Habibie	Mathematician
3	Spatial intelligence	Ki Joko Pekik Ivan Gunawan	Painter Designer

4	Kinesthetic Intelligence	Evan Dimas	Football player
5	Musical Intelligence	Erwin Gutawa	Composer
6	Interpersonal Intelligence	Ali Alatas	Minister of Foreign Affairs
7	Intrapersonal Intelligence	Mario Teguh	Motivator
8	Naturalist Intelligence	Charles Darwin	Biologist
9	Existentialist Intelligence	Sokrates, Plato	Philosopher

Based on Table 1, it can be proved that the intelligence of each individual is different, so are the children. Each child has a variety of intelligence. There are children who are fluent, smart at drawing, quickly calculate, good at sports, and so on. Therefore, teachers should implement appropriate learning in accordance with the interests and talents of the students in order to optimally develop their potentials.

### **Thematic Learning in Elementary Class Early**

Elementary school students ranging from 6 - 12 years as Laura E. Berk (2007: 289) defines this age as "school years". This is because since it is the beginning of children formal schooling. The period of primary school are also often referred to as the intellectual or the school harmony. During this school harmony, children are more easily trained.

The tasks of the primary school children development include: (1) mastering the physical skills necessary for games and physical activities, (2) foster healthy living, (3) learning to get along and work in groups, (4) learning social roles according to gender, (5) learning to read, write, and count to be able to participate in the community, (6) acquiring a required number of concepts to think effectively, (7) develop a conscience, morals, and values, (8) achieving personal independence (Desmita 2009: 34-35).

According to Mahmud (2010: 349 - 350) elementary school period is divided into two early classes (6 - 9 years) and advanced class period (9-12/13). Early graders of primary schools have different characteristics with older age children. They prefer to play, move, enjoy working in groups, and doing something directly. Therefore, teachers should develop learning containing elements of game, have students to move, working or studying in groups, as well as providing an opportunity to be directly involved in learning (Desmita, 2009: 35, Sudarwan Danim, 2010: 60).

In addition, early grade students of primary school need holistic comprehension, which means they can not understand something in isolation. Therefore, an integrated learning approach is needed. This is in accordance with the mandate of the 2013 curriculum, that the teaching model for early grade students of elementary school (Class I, II, III), namely is thematic learning. The term can be interpreted as an integrated learning model that uses a theme to tie some subjects to provide a meaningful experience for students (Trianto, 2011: 147).

The characteristics of thematic learning according to Ministry of Education (2006: 6) are as follow:

1. Experience and learning activities are very relevant to the developmental level and needs of primary school students.

2. Selected activities in the implementation of thematic learning start from the the students interests and needs.
3. Learning activities will be more meaningful and memorable for the students so that they can last longer.
4. Helping to develop students' thinking skills.
5. Presenting pragmatic learning activities according to students' encountered problems in the environment.
6. Developing social skills such as cooperation, tolerance, and responsive to the opinions of others.

Thematic learning also has some advantages for students, they are: 1) to focus on the learning process rather than the learning result, 2) to eliminate the false boundaries in interdepartmental curriculum and provide an integrative learning approach, 3) to provide a student-centered curriculum that is associated with interests, needs, and intelligence, 4) to stimulate the discovery and independent investigation inside and outside the classroom, and 5) to help students build relationships between concepts and ideas to increase appreciation and understanding (Trianto, 2011: 160 - 161).

### **Optimizing Multiple Intelligence through Thematic Learning in Early Grade Students of Elementary School**

Optimization of multiple intelligence in elementary school can be performed on all subjects with creative and innovative learning as thematic. Thematic learning model is essentially an integrated learning model that integrates basic principles such as learning to use an actual theme that is close to the students and is involved in everyday life. The theme of learning is used as a means of unifying the different material of some subjects. The materials are combined in a single theme presented by taking into account student characteristics such as interests, talents, intelligence, and the students prerequisite so that every child has the opportunity to succeed.

In order multiple intelligence can be best applied in thematic learning, there are at least three principals to notice, they are (modified Trianto, 2011: 168-171).

1. Planning Phase
  - a. Determining the types of subjects that are combined  
The initial step of thematic lesson plans that teachers must know is identifying the characteristics of the various subjects and then integrating closely related subjects like language with social and civics or math with science.
  - b. Choosing a material, competence standards, and basic competence  
At this stage the teacher should be able to find a competence standard - competence standards between overlapping or interrelated subjects to be comprehensively presented.
  - c. Determining intelligence to develop  
The next step is determining the intelligences to develop in learning. This is important so that teachers can design appropriate learning in accordance with the interests and talent of the students.
  - d. Making up the theme web  
In determining the theme a teacher should pay attention to several principles, such as the proximity to students' life, the theme chosen should be of simple theme to a more complex one, interesting for students, and in accordance with the conditions, interests, and talents of students.
  - e. Formulating indicators of learning outcomes  
Each indicator formulated should be include four components is: Audience, Behavior, Condition, Degree.



f. Preparing a syllabus and lesson plan

This step is an overview of the thematic learning activities that will be implemented. In preparing the syllabi and lesson plans, teachers should implement a variety of methods or strategies of active learning, creative, innovative, fun, and easy to understand by the students.

2. Implementation phase

The three principles that must be taken into consideration in the implementation of thematic learning are a) the teacher should not dominate the learning activities, but acts as a mentor and facilitator, b) the teacher clearly explains the responsibilities for both individuals and groups in any given task, and c) the teacher should be able to accommodate the students' ideas that sometimes are not in the lesson plan.

3. Stage Assessment and Evaluation

The assessment in thematic learning should be done continuously and thoroughly in both the process and the learning outcomes obtained by the students. This is very important because it can be used as a basis to determine the progress of potential learners as well as teachers' reflection for the success or failure of learning.

The following examples are net themes of thematic learning in class II with the theme of "My Family" in accordance with the competence standard of 2013 curriculum.



Figure 1. Example of Nets - Theme Nets in Thematic Learning

Figure 1 shows that multiple intelligence can be optimized through thematic learning that is tailored to the competence standard. The optimization of multiple intelligence in thematic learning

can not be separated from the role of the teacher as a planner and instructor. A teacher should be really able to design and implement thematic learning in fun, interesting, and meaningful way.

## CONCLUSION

Early grade students of elementary school are children at an early age. This period is a short but it is very important for a child's life, therefore all potential and intelligence of children at this age need to be optimally cultivated. There are many models of learning that can be applied to early graders of elementary school. However, the most important of all is that the developed learning model should consider the characteristics, interests, and talents of the students.

Thematic learning is one of the models that can be used to optimize multiple intelligence of early grades students of elementary school. This is because thematic learning is a student-centered learning whose application considers the characteristics, potentials, and interests of the students. Moreover, thematic learning is also conducted in an integrated way, using the theme as a unifying tool. The themes use actual, close to the student's life, interesting, and adjustable to the students' conditions. Therefore, it can optimize the entire intelligence and provide meaningful experiences to the students.

## REFERENCES

- Armstrong, Thomas. 2002. *Setiap Anak Cerdas*. Jakarta: Penerbit PT Gramedia Pustaka Umum.
- Berk, L. E. 2007. *Development Through the Lifespan*. Boston: Pearson Allyn and Bacon.
- Depdiknas. 2006. *Strategi yang Mengaktifkan Siswa*. Jakarta: Depdiknas.
- Desmita. 2009. *Psikologi Perkembangan Peserta Didik: Panduan Bagi Orang Tua dan Guru dalam Memahami Psikologi Anak Usia SD, SMP, dan SMA*. Bandung: Remaja Rosda Karya.
- Fadjar. Tanpa Tahun. *Kecerdasan Ganda*. Yogyakarta: PPPPTK Matematika.
- Gardner, H. 2006. *Multiple Intelligence: New Horison Teori and Practice*. New York: Basic Book.
- Masnur Muslich. 2011. *Pendidikan Karakter Menjawab Tantangan Krisis Multidimensional*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Seto Mulyadi. 2002. *Mempersiapkan Anak Unggul Milenium Ke-3* (Kompas Cyber Media).
- Suharjo. 2006. *Mengenal Pendidikan Sekolah Dasar*. Jakarta: Direktorat Jendral Pendidikan Tinggi.
- Trianto. 2011. *Desain Pengembangan Pembelajaran Tematik Bagi Anak Usia Dini Kelas Awal SD/MI*. Jakarta: KENCANA.



Jl. Marsda Adisucipto, Yogyakarta, 55281 Telp. +62-274-513056

ISBN 978-602-14483-2-8

